

Auditor's report

Nkomazi Local Municipality

30 June 2016

Report of the auditor-general to the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature and the council on the Nkomazi Local Municipality

Report on the financial statements

Introduction

1. I have audited the financial statements of the Nkomazi Local Municipality set out on pages ... to ..., which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2016, the statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets, cash flow statement and statement of comparison of budget and actual amounts for the year then ended, as well as the notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Accounting officer's responsibility for the financial statements

2. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the South African Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (SA Standards of GRAP) and the requirements of the Municipal Finance Management Act of South Africa, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003) (MFMA) and the Division of Revenue Act of South Africa, 2015 (Act No. 1 of 2015) (DoRA), and for such internal control as the accounting officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor-general's responsibility

3. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing. Those standards require that I comply with ethical requirements, and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.
4. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the municipality's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the municipality's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.
5. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Opinion

6. In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Nkomazi Local Municipality as at 30 June 2016 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the SA Standards of GRAP and the requirements of the MFMA and DoRA.

Emphasis of matters

7. I draw attention to the matters below. My opinion is not modified in respect of these matters.

Restatement of corresponding figures

8. As disclosed in note 47 to the financial statements, the corresponding figures for 30 June 2016 have been restated as a result of an error discovered during 2016 in the financial statements of the municipality at, and for the year ended, 30 June 2015.

Material losses

9. As disclosed in note 55 to the financial statements, material losses of R8 620 915 (2014-15: R14 778 280) were incurred as a result of electricity distribution losses, which represented 15% (2014-15: 25%) of the total electricity purchased.

Material impairments

10. As disclosed in notes 9 and 10 to the financial statements, the receivables balance was significantly impaired. The impairment of consumer debtors amounted to R84 996 141 (2014-15: R43 308 986), which represented 38% (2014-15: 26%) of the total consumer debtors. The contribution to the provision for debt impairment was R41 687 153 (2014-15: R23 820 882).

Additional matter

11. I draw attention to the matter below. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Unaudited disclosure notes

12. In terms of section 125(2)(e) of the MFMA, the municipality is required to disclose particulars of non-compliance with the MFMA. This disclosure requirement did not form part of the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, I do not express an opinion thereon.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

13. In accordance with the Public Audit Act of South Africa, 2004 (Act No. 25 of 2004) (PAA) and the general notice issued in terms thereof, I have a responsibility to report findings on the reported performance information against predetermined objectives for selected development priorities presented in the annual performance report, compliance with legislation and internal control. I performed tests to identify reportable findings as described under each subheading but not to gather evidence to express assurance on these matters. Accordingly, I do not express an opinion or conclusion on these matters.

Predetermined objectives

14. I performed procedures to obtain evidence about the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information for the following selected development priority presented in the annual performance report of the municipality for the year ended 30 June 2016:
 - Key performance area 1: basic service delivery on pages ... to ...
15. I evaluated the usefulness of the reported performance information to determine whether it was presented in accordance with the National Treasury's annual reporting principles and whether the reported performance was consistent with the planned development priority. I further performed tests to determine whether indicators and targets were well defined, verifiable, specific, measurable, time bound and relevant, as required by the National Treasury's Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information.
16. I assessed the reliability of the reported performance information to determine whether it was valid, accurate and complete.
17. I did not raise any material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information for the following development priority:
 - Basic service delivery

Additional matters

18. Although I raised no material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information for the selected development priority, I draw attention to the following matters:

Achievement of planned targets

19. Refer to the annual performance report on pages... to ... for information on the achievement of the planned targets for the year.

Adjustment of material misstatements

20. I identified material misstatements in the annual performance report submitted for auditing. These material misstatements were on the reported performance information for basic service delivery. As management subsequently corrected the misstatements, I did not raise any material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information.

Compliance with legislation

21. I performed procedures to obtain evidence that the municipality had complied with applicable legislation regarding financial matters, financial management and other related matters. My material findings on compliance with specific matters in key legislation, as set out in the general notice issued in terms of the PAA, are as follows:

Annual financial statements, performance report and annual report

22. The financial statements submitted for auditing were not prepared in all material respects in accordance with the requirements of section 122 of the MFMA. Material misstatements of non-current assets, current liabilities and disclosure items identified by the auditors in the submitted financial statements were subsequently corrected, resulting in the financial statements receiving an unqualified audit opinion.
23. The council failed to adopt an oversight report containing the council's comments on the annual report within the prescribed timelines, as required by section 129(1) of the MFMA.

Procurement and contract management

24. Invitations for competitive bidding were not always advertised for the required minimum period, in contravention of supply chain management (SCM) regulation 22(1) and 22(2).
25. Contracts were awarded to bidders based on points given for criteria that differed from those stipulated in the original invitation for bidding, in contravention of SCM regulations 21(b) and 28(1)(a) and the Preferential Procurement Regulations.
26. Contracts were awarded to bidders that did not score the highest points in the evaluation process, in contravention of section 2(1)(f) of the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act of South Africa, 2000 (Act No. 5 of 2000).
27. Thresholds for local content on designated sectors' procurement were not properly applied in accordance with the requirements of preferential procurement regulation 9.

Expenditure management

28. Money owed by the municipality was not always paid within 30 days, as required by section 65(2)(e) of the MFMA.
29. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent unauthorised expenditure, as required by section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA.
30. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent irregular expenditure, as required by section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA.
31. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent fruitless and wasteful expenditure, as required by section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA.

Human resource management and compensation

32. Bonuses were awarded to the municipal manager and senior managers directly accountable to the municipal manager without the necessary approvals, in contravention of section 57(4)(b) of the Municipal Systems Act of South Africa, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000).

Liability management

33. An effective system of internal control for liabilities (including an accrual listing) was not in place, as required by section 63(2)(c) of the MFMA.

Internal control

34. I considered internal control relevant to my audit of the financial statements, annual performance report and compliance with legislation. The matters reported below are limited to the significant internal control deficiencies that resulted in the findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.

Leadership

35. The accounting officer did not review the monthly reports or the financial statements and the annual performance report before submitting them for auditing, resulting in numerous misstatements having to be corrected.

Financial and performance management

36. Management did not implement the daily and monthly controls designed for the municipality's business processes relating to bank and creditor reconciliations.
37. Non-compliance with legislation could have been prevented had compliance been properly reviewed and monitored.

Auditor-General

Mbombela

30 November 2016



AUDITOR-GENERAL
SOUTH AFRICA

Auditing to build public confidence